UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS AMHERST
FACULTY SENATE
UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION COUNCIL

September 25, 2023 Meeting Minutes

12:15 – 1:30 p.m.

Zoom link for all virtual meetings this year (same as last year):
https://umass-amherst.zoom.us/j/95593109926?pwd=MmJEdUtRQndGeDArcjdCVTVJdHk5QT09

I. In attendance: Brent Auerbach, Carolyn Bassett, Elena Carbone, Elizabeth Connor, Justin Gross, Christiane Healey (chair), Benjamin Marlin, Alison Messier, Cristiano Mazzei, Nancy Noble, Gwyneth Rost, Caralyn Zehnder, Anthony Paik, Gwyneth Rost, Beth Lisi, Farshid Hajir

Welcome to Beth Lisi, a new member representing CFTL.

There was a moment of silence for Mei-Yau Shih, who recently passed away.

II. Annual Election of the UEC chair for AY23-24
Nomination and full support for Christiane Healey as the UEC Chair for AY23-24.

III. Identifying minute takers for our eight meetings this academic year
Fall 2023

- Sept 25 (Zoom): ____Elena Carbone_____
- Oct 23 (Zoom): _____Caralyn Zehnder_____
- Nov 27 (Zoom): _____Cristiano Mazzei_____
- Dec 11 (in person):__ _Nancy Noble_____

Spring 2024

- Jan 29 (Zoom): ___ Justin Gross_____
- Feb 26 (Zoom): ___Brent Auerbach_____
- Mar 25 (Zoom): ___Alison Messier_____
- Apr 22 (in person) ___Benjamin Marlin_____

IV. Minutes from the April 24th meeting were approved with one edit.

Carolyn offered the following clarification to add to the Q & A: Smart About Money is a financial education program now housed in Undergraduate Student Success.

V. Recap of last year's topics and discussion of priorities for this academic year

- **Holds prevent enrollment in classes**.
  UEC started to learn about different kinds of holds last year. Several other groups are working on this issue (*PACE, UDC). Elizabeth Connor is chairing PACE this year and shared that it's a complicated issue. Carolyn provided a brief history of PACE.

  *PACE = Partnerships for Advancing Completion and Equity

Carolyn – no single group is responsible for this issue; there is a desire for it to be a multidisciplinary project, but no specific strategy has been determined yet. PACE will continue its work.

Elizabeth – concerned that faculty don't have a voice on specific issues such as holds and therefore proposed that someone from UEC serve on PACE to understand this and other issues related to UG education. Could explore this with Farshid.

Tony agreed this may be a good idea.

NEXT STEPS:

- Because this is a difficult topic for UEC to tackle, it was agreed to put this issue on the back burner for now. However, Elizabeth will find out if PACE would like a UEC representative and Christiane said if anyone is interested in joining to let her know.

Christiane asked which of the topics (listed below) UEC should focus on this semester.

- **Registration periods are determined by the number of university credits.**
- **Academic Probation policy – how does it affect first year students?**
- **Supporting students (and faculty) with disabilities re: examine scheduling and other issues.**
- **Another topic suggested by the Rules committee (Tony): Equity Action Plans.**
  Per Tony: There is interest in having a more centralized component (namely, assessments) in the EAPs. UEC and Grad Council asked by the Rules Committee to get involved in the assessment portion, specifically to consider developing recommendations and guidelines that provide a balance of equity in classrooms while maintaining/protecting academic freedom. There is also interest in getting suggestions about possible interventions for improving educational outcomes for students of color and first gen students. Tony noted that the previous Provost really saw this as a Departmental matter; when it's a centralized issue then it has to go through Faculty Senate.

  Elizabeth noted that at the Academic Leadership meeting in August, a centralized assessment was discussed. Nancy mentioned that a TEAMS channel has been set up and a PDF with slides from that meeting were shared this morning with Department Heads/Chairs.

  NEXT STEPS:

  - Christiane to talk more with Tony and correspond with Wilmore to check status and possibly invite Wilmore to talk to UEC about the assessment component of the Equity Action Plans.

In response to Christiane's question about any other topics the UEC wants to consider for discussion. Two topics were raised – AI and Canvas.

Q: Nancy – where do we stand with faculty statements and AI? There is a lot of confusion on campus.

A: Tony – a Task Force has been set up; they still need to figure out what they will focus on. Farshid and Patricia Cardoso-Erase, Interim Dean of Students, sent a message** stating that the Faculty Senate has determined that the use of such tools in a course without explicit permission from the instructor constitutes a violation of the academic honesty policy.

**Carolyn – provided a link to the email
https://view.marcom.umass.edu/?qs=7b5dde3c36c01436833cb5ca0f9ddb7444c306ee9cce68323804fd17f57c581c7d51a10af90d4851c5e7c9cd4f7118a264b78a35993ec9688be7ad1c15bd7e2e640d64b0c4bec3bb848424d79eff8db4

Ben – there are many cases re: use of AI and many interpretations by students, so it may help to invite someone from the Task Force share their insight re: what use of AI means, its limits, etc.

Carolyn - Individual instructors are making their own decisions; they should put an explicit statement in their syllabus and create a space for discussion in class.

Beth restated the usefulness of putting an explicit statement in the syllabus and keep reviewing it with students. Beth also mentioned an ongoing discussion group for faculty re: AI that meets monthly https://www.umass.edu/ctl/programs/facilitated-discussions/chatgpt-and-generative-ai-discussion-group-navigating-future

NEXT STEPS:

- Given the fact that there is a Task Force, AI is not an issue for the UEC to take on at this time.

Alison – curious about Canvas, how to use it beyond just as a LMS.

Justin – shared his experience with Canvas. Moodle had an easy way to invite guests, Canvas has it, but the system software feature is turned off. Note: Faculty need to email instruct@umass.edu to add guests in Canvas (or other issues).

Helpful resource from College of Education – *Get Started Teaching in Canvas*
https://www.umass.edu/education/facultyhub/instructional-support/get-started-teaching-canvas

Farshid said to reach out to him if anyone has trouble with Canvas; IDEAS is also set up to assist.

Christiane added that The Instructional Media Lab is very helpful.

Farshid shared use data for this semester: 46% Canvas, 46% Moodle, ~8% Blackboard.

NEXT STEPS:

- Christiane noted that we're in the transition period with Canvas and the assumption is that things will get better! Underlying note: Not an issue for UEC at this time.

Christiane asked UEC members to examine the remaining three issues (Registration periods, Academic Probation policy, and Supporting students/faculty with disabilities) and identify which we want to tackle/ where we can make the biggest difference.

What followed was an extensive discussion re: supporting students/faculty with disabilities.

Caralyn - would like to know what the students see and how to make the process more efficient for exams. There needs to be an open conversation with DSS and find out more from them (e.g., possible roadblocks, etc.).

Elizabeth – Q: What is the role of advisors at NSOT re: disability services? A: Start early with conversations about setting up a set of steps to follow (and restart these conversations when students return from suspensions).

Farshid – Suggested inviting Cheryl Ponder, Assistant VC Advocacy/Inclusion/Support Programs. Some discussion re: the lack of transition from HS to college and having needed accommodations support systems in place.

Christiane: She will also reach out to AnnMarie Thorpe, DS Director.

Gwyneth – Suggested adding discussion re: access technologies.

Alison - We might also want to invite someone to give a perspective from the ATC (Assistive Technology Center).

Nancy - It would be helpful for Disability Services to provide a general update to faculty about new tools being used (e.g., GLEAN). For more information about GLEAN from DSS:
https://www.umass.edu/disability/students/accommodations-students/note-taking-procedures
Here is a link to GLEAN: https://glean.co/

NEXT STEPS:

- UEC will focus on the Disability Services issue.
- Invite AnnMarie Thorpe or a designee to the Oct meeting.
- Farshid will reach out to Cheryl Ponder.
- Also consider reaching out to ATC.

VI. Meeting adjourned 1:31 p.m.